

H1-B TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS

Grantee: Northeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Round: 3 **Region:** 5

Grant Amount: \$1,750,000

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Duration: November 15, 2000 to November 14, 2002

Population Served: Nine county area in Northeast Indiana with a population of 551,081.

Geographic Area: Nine county area including Allen County, which is home to Fort Wayne, the largest city in Northeast Indiana and eight more rural counties which surround Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne.

**Targeted Industries/
Jobs/skills:** Targeted groups will be unemployed and underemployed workers, incumbent workers in entry level IT positions, low income individuals, dislocated graduating HS seniors. This project seeks to provide IT and IT-related training to these groups including the soft skills that are most in demand by area employers.

Uniqueness of Proposal: The Techworks proposal will work with graduating seniors by developing special IT training programs with local high schools where graduating seniors can take course work which allows them to graduate from high school with an IT or IT related certificate. Scholarship vouchers will also be awarded to graduates enabling them to pursue advanced IT training following graduation. The goal of this set of special training services will be to provide high school graduates with IT training before and after high school graduation, making the transition from school-to-work a smooth one.

Partnerships: Ivy Tech State College, Job Works, State Employment Service, the Northeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board, City of Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Community Schools, DeKalb County Central United School District, The Ottenweller Company, Inc., TD&M, Co., General Motors Corp (Fort Wayne Assembly), Sprint, and the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center.

The Need: In Northeast Indiana, the available pool of IT trained workers is not commensurate with demand. Dramatic growth in the demand for IT and IT related workers has increased 300% in the last two years, particularly in the areas of network and software engineering. Employers have also clearly identified a need for employees with "soft skills" in addition to technical skills and certifications.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PROJECT:

This project will develop a set of training opportunities which build upon the existing training infrastructure in Northeast Indiana. Techworks will use a voucher system to enable individual trainees to assess IT and IT

related training at local institutions. Scholarships or vouchers to access IT programs will be awarded to individuals who fall into targeted groups identified by assessment.